



# Buzzwords ...

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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*Buzzwords No 18 April 1990*

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*"OK, you blew the first day. But today is the second day of the rest of your life."*

## CROP REPORT - LATEST

The most important feature of the Honey Packer's Association's conference call on 19 March was a decrease in the country's estimated honey crop. Three of the regular participants on the call reduced their estimates by as much as 50%.

The resulting figures for average production per hive reduced the estimated crop prospects by 1300 tonnes (13.5 percent lower) to now indicate a total New Zealand crop that is below average.

The obvious repercussion of this is to further strengthen the market for bulk honey.

There were again comments of the lack of high-quality clover with many late-flowering nectar sources such as vipers bugloss,

nodding thistle and catsear providing a large proportion of the honey crop. This has meant some export orders for high quality 0-9 mm grade clover going begging.

Additional comment:

There is a long term trend for New Zealand to export honey into specific niche markets. Years ago we relied on the HMA to "dispose" of the surplus in the country. Most went out as bulk honey with little product definition.

Today as a result of deregulation we have numerous exporters following different markets with many new diverse markets for honey appearing. The list so far is: "high-moisture" honey, 0-9 mm honey, vipers bugloss, nodding thistle, thyme, manuka, honeydew, ling heather, organic honey, and comb honey in many different types of packaging along with a

similar scene for packed honey. There are also an increasing number of other named floral sources attracting interest in export markets.

The benefit of all this change is that we are developing our products towards more insular markets that will not be so greatly affected by large swings in the world market for honey. Our goal for the future must be to continue along this track; the marketers finding new opportunities for our products and relaying this information back to the producers, the producers listening to the marketers and changing their production to suit the wants of the market.

When we are able to export our annual surplus of approximately 2500 tonnes totally into insulated niche markets, we will achieve price stability.

*Information from the president, Honey Packers' Association.*

## SUGAR PRICES

There's every indication that sugar prices are going to "firm" (or go through the roof, depending on who you believe).

The world price is at an eight-year high of 15c US/lb (\$NZ570 per tonne @ 0.58). The 15c barrier is an important one for the market, and production trends suggest that it will go higher.

A few pieces of information about production: The Thai crop will be about one million tonnes less than last year, and the Japanese are buying heavily in that market. Cuba's production has been affected by rains and is down to 7.2 million tonnes. Australia's crop could be more than 200,000 tonnes down on 1989's.

So the final verdict? No-one's saying anything too definite, but most are predicting a shortage of sugar, with prices staying at their present high level or perhaps even rising.

It would seem to be a good idea to buy or forward-order now for spring supplies, if you can.

*MAF apiculture unit*

## 1080 PROGRAMME

The 1990/91 programme for poisoning possums with 1080 has been announced. This will affect beekeepers in many areas. The list of each district's programmes is too long to print here; this is just a reminder to renew contacts with your local pest destruction officer. The Pest Destruction Boards have been abolished, and their functions taken over by regional councils.

There will be possum poisoning in south Kaipara, Waikato, Taupo, Reporoa, Bay of Plenty, Taumarunui, Wanganui, Taihape, southern Hawkes Bay, Wellington region, north Canterbury, Banks Peninsula, McKenzie basin, Central Otago, south Otago, Southland and the West Coast. People on the Chathams and at Scott Base can obviously breathe easily.

Field trials on the use of molasses and oxalic acid as repellents

in paste baits are continuing, and should be completed by June of this year.

*MAF apiculture unit*

## 1990/91 INDUSTRY PLAN

The national executive committee met at Flock House in middle March to develop the industry plan for the coming year. Also attending were various MAF advisory and research personnel. This was the seventh planning exercise carried out by the NBA. Our use of such a formalised planning process has gone a long way to giving us acceptance and credibility in dealing with organisations outside our own, including government departments. It is also a valuable measure of what we have intended to do to compare to what we actually accomplish. The phrase is 'What's been did and what's been hid...?'

The mission and goals of the NBA remain unchanged. Our mission statement, 'Better beekeeping, better marketing', states the overall intention of our organisation. Our current set of goals are:

**GOAL A: INCREASE INDUSTRY PROFITABILITY**

**GOAL B: IMPROVE BEEKEEPER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**GOAL C: IMPROVE INDUSTRY CO-OPERATION AND COMMUNICATION**

**GOAL D: IMPROVE INDUSTRY PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**GOAL E: IMPROVE THE INDUSTRY RESEARCH POLICY**

**GOAL F: ENSURE ADEQUATE COST EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

Some of the objectives for this coming year include:

\* To ensure that the industry is aware of standards for exported organic honey by 31 December 1990.

\* Promote the value of beekeeping industry funded research by 31 December 1990.

\* Develop an industry code of practice by 31 July 1990.

\* To increase external funding input to beekeeping research by 31 December 1990.

Each of the goals is a rather general statement of our 'impact areas', the areas that we feel we can make the most progress in fulfilling our mission statement, the areas that are actually within our range of possible activity.

Within each goal, we set objectives. These must be unambiguous statements of what we intend to accomplish. They must be measurable and they must contain a date by which the objective should be completed.

To ensure that the objectives are met, each is further expanded with a series of action plans, detailing what needs to be done, by whom and by what date.

It is very simple to say 'It sure would be a good idea if new branch officers had some sort of guidelines and tips about how to do their jobs'. By including it in the plan, we are forced to decide just what really needs to be done, who can do it and when it should be done by.

The industry plan itself, though a physical document (you will be receiving a copy when it has been printed), is really much more than that. It is a dynamic, changing, developing series of statements by which our industry plans and monitors its activities.



When you get your plan, read through it. Not every action plan is written for the national executive to do - they often involve getting information from branch secretaries, receiving submissions or getting other people to prepare, discuss or advise. It is the industry's method of managing itself, of making sure that it sets realistic targets and then sets about actually achieving them.

You as a beekeeper need to 'own' this plan, to realise that it is your organisation's expression of what intends to do for/with you. Contact an executive member to discuss any aspect, to volunteer yourself to carry out some of the work. Get your branch to discuss the industry plan, make comments and suggestions about how best to achieve our objectives.

*NBA executive*

## BRANCH NOTES

**Waikato** branch will be holding their AGM on Friday 6 April, at MAF Ruakura (no time specified). They will have an expert on timber preservation speaking, to give members the latest info on what products to use for different applications.

Nelson Lakes National Park was the idyllic setting for the sixth top-of-the-south buzz in recently, the Rotiti bienniale. Beekeepers from **Nelson** and **Marlborough** branches, and visitors from elsewhere in the country, were joined by international travellers arriving at Picton.

The star-studded cast of thousands, under the avuncular gaze of Jasper Bray and Ron Stratford, enjoyed the great setting, the tall tales and true, the good company. There was even some learning about beekeeping matters: wasps, 1080 poisoning, and how not to load trucks (the gospel according to the MOT). The only question left unanswered was how Stuart Ecroyd fitted his entire equipment display into his low-flying Commodore.

Mark February 1992 for your visit to this great spot.

**Bee clubs** sometimes provide information for this column. These clubs are important forums for hobbyist beekeepers to get together and share ideas. NBA branches can really help domestic bee clubs - how about someone in your branch inviting the local club to visit a commercial honey house, see a demonstration of woodworking and hive preservation, or look at a queen-raising operation.

## CODE OF ETHICS

Your branch might be one of the 12 that haven't responded to executive's query about codes of practice (or codes of ethics).

There were two remits at last year's conference proposing a nationwide code of ethics. NBA vice-president Gavin White is handling this issue for executive.

Gavin's written to all branches asking them if they have a code of ethics, or what they would like in one. For an example of such a code, see the autumn 1986 *New Zealand Beekeeper*. Now's your chance to have a say on this issue - write to Gavin at PO Box 28, Leeston, Canterbury.

*NBA executive*

## SHIM WAS MISQUOTED!

Those of you following the US import debate might have read February's issue of *Speedy Bee*. In it Dr Shimunaki, USDA's head bee pathologist, was reported as saying some pretty odd things.

"The quality of New Zealand queens is not too good", he apparently remarked, and also "I don't see why American beekeepers would want to get them".

Shim has been to New Zealand as part of our fight for access to the USA, and has been very supportive of our case. His first point was that the quality control of queens was lacking, not the quality of individual queens. That's an important distinction - the USDA have had some excellent queens from New Zealand, although there have been problems with individual queens.

His other quote was also taken out of context. His point was about mite-free bees - if (mainland) US beekeepers want mite-free bees they can get them from Hawaii, without having to buy from New Zealand. Shim also questioned the worth of paying a lot for mite-free queens to them put them into infested colonies.

## WASP PARASITE RESEARCH

TV1 news on 21 February stated that DSIR Lincoln is ending the wasp parasite breeding project.

This is not correct. The project is planned to continue until winter of 1991, so that all commitments to supply parasite cocoons to current contributors can be fulfilled. At present, enquiries from potential contributors are being pencilled in. If there are sufficient, whether to continue the production of cocoons beyond 1991 will be decided at a later date.

During January DSIR obtained evidence that the parasite has established at Pelorus Bridge, between Blenheim and Nelson. A nest of the common wasp excavated by the Minister of Conservation (Phillip Woollaston) as part of the "War on Wasps" launch by his Department, was found to be under attack by parasites. At least 146 developing wasps had been killed.

There were no parasite release boxes in the area this last spring, so the parasites in the nest could have only come from nests that had been attacked during the previous summer. Because the parasites must have completed a 12-month developmental cycle (overwintered and emerged from cocoons in the remains of the old nest), and then sought out and entered the nest excavated by the Minister, we can now claim that the parasite is established in the area.

The significance of establishment is very great. It means that if we were to do nothing more, the parasite should exist for good. Also, there is the potential for it to spread throughout at least the South Island without human intervention. Of course, further establishment and spread will be enhanced by continuing our cocoon production and distribution.

We are now breeding from the parasites recovered from the Minister's nest. We hope that their progeny, originating from parasites which have succeeded in the field in New Zealand, will be more adapted to succeed here than the original stock which was imported from Europe.

This summer we are also evaluating methods of inoculating parasites directly into wasp nests, as another and perhaps more certain means of establishing the parasites. Results can be expected by winter.

Barry Donovan, DSIR

## FARMERS AWARD

The Secretary of the Lincoln College Foundation, Andrew Donnithorne, announced recently that the annual farmers award would be open to all categories of animal enterprises except sheep, beef and dairy farmers. This includes beekeepers.

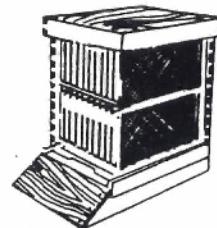
The reason for this is that sheep, beef and dairy farmers have been eligible for awards in previous years. "We are seeking to discover", said Mr Donnithorne, "outstanding and innovative farmers who are providing leadership in their particular industry and would benefit from further study overseas. This year we are pleased to be able to say that the

Trustees have increased the travel grant to \$8,000. "The trust will be accepting entries from any category of farming as long as it produces food or fibre and or other products, and broadly fits into the animal kingdom but does not include sheep or cattle."

The Foundation was established in 1978 at the time of the Lincoln centenary and it was seen by past and present members of the University as an appropriate commemoration to mark 100 years of progress by the university.

The primary objective of the Foundation is to encourage and facilitate the flow of appropriate people to and from New Zealand; people who can contribute to the development of New Zealand's land-based industries. Applications from people without access to other sources of funds are particularly welcome.

The prospectus and application forms are available from the foundation at PO Box 84, Lincoln University Post Office.



## WORLD HONEY MARKET

United States production for 1989 is down a whopping 21% from 1988's - to 76,818 tonnes. Average bulk price is 48.4c per pound (\$NZ1.84 @ 0.58), well above the buy-back price of 33-40 cents, depending on grade (\$NZ1.25-1.52/kg).

The buy-back rates at 6 March 1990 were unchanged from those announced on 15 April 1989.

## CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

One Otago reader reports good service from New Zealand Post in investigating the late arrival of some Northland queens. The bees were late (5 days for Fastpost) - that's not so good I suppose, but enquiries by the beekeeper got a thorough investigation, and some compensation.

### BUZZWORDS IS ...

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